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HOUSING OF FOREIGN STUDENTS. GUIDELINES.

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THIS GUIDELINE IS ADDRESSED TO THE FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISOR AS THE COORDINATOR OF SERVICES TO FOREIGN STUDENTS. THE THREE BASIC FUNCTIONS THE ADVISOR CAN PERFORM ARE--(1) DISCUSSION TO BROADEN THE BASE OF AWARENESS, (2) REVIEW TO EVALUATE AND ASSESS PRACTICES AND PROBLEMS IN LIGHT OF RESOURCES, AND (3) INNOVATION AND MODIFICATION OF CURRENT PRACTICES. THE INITIAL BROCHURE SENT TO FOREIGN STUDENTS SHOULD INCLUDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSING SITUATION AT THE INSTITUTION, A SUMMARY OF ON- OR OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING REGULATIONS, AND AN INDICATION OF THE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS. SPECIFIC FOLLOW-UP ALTERNATIVES ARE OUTLINED. THE INSTITUTION MUST BE READY TO PROVIDE ARRIVAL ASSISTANCE AND PRELIMINARY ORIENTATION. SOURCES OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT IN ARRIVAL ASSISTANCE ARE SUGGESTED. PRELIMINARY ORIENTATION AND METHODS OF ORGANIZATION DEPEND ON THE HOUSING FACILITIES AND THE REGULATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTIONS. LATE ARRIVALS AND KINDS OF HOUSING AVAILABLE ARE DISCUSSED. ON-CAMPUS HOUSING INCLUDES RESIDENCE HALLS, FRATERNITIES, COOPERATIVES, AND INTERNATIONAL RESIDENCES. CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO ON-CAMPUS HOUSING INCLUDE FOOD SERVICES, VACATION PERIODS, GRADUATE HOUSING, AND HOUSING FOR MARRIED STUDENTS. OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING BASICALLY REQUIRES THE SAME KIND OF PREPARATION. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE DISCUSSED. THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 1860 19TH ST., N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. FOR $0.50. (IM)

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Guidelines

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HOUSING OF FOREIGN STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

This *Guideline* deals with a topic of major importance to both foreign students and the institutions which admit them. The housing of foreign students can be considered on several levels. It is part of the larger concern about housing for *all* students. It is immediately and directly related to other aspects of the *foreign* student program. Above all, it is a significant dimension in the total educational experience of those involved.

This *Guideline* is basically a discussion of the latter two aspects. It is addressed to the Foreign Student Adviser as the coordinator of services to foreign students. It is intended as a body of practical information and ideas, to be discussed with and used by appropriate colleagues in administration and student personnel services, particularly the Housing Bureau or Office, or the person(s) responsible for the actual housing experiences of foreign students. It is hoped that it will be of special value in working with private individuals in the community who may be involved in those experiences.

The *Guideline* assumes diversity among institutions in the needs, the resources, and the facilities that relate to the housing of foreign students. At the same time, it assumes consensus on a *basic* point of view—that the housing of foreign students is a concern that goes beyond questions exclusively of the adjustment or the experiences of foreign students to become a matter of vital importance and responsibility to the institution in the education of all its students. This point of view should apply regardless of the size of the institution, the size of its foreign student enrollment, or its present housing situation. It should also be reflected in an administration policy statement regarding the responsibility of the institution for the housing of its students.

THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISER

As with certain other dimensions of an institution's foreign student program, the three basic functions that the Foreign Student Adviser could perform relative to the housing of foreign students are:

1. **Discussion**: to draw together individuals and offices with either established or potential interest or involvement in order to broaden the base of awareness and concern;
2. **Review**: to evaluate and assess present practices and problems in light of current resources in order to determine what modifications or innovations might be made;
3. **Experimentation**: to affect modification or revision of current practices within present structures, to strengthen current practices, or to attempt new directions.

The Foreign Student Adviser could draw together representative spokesmen for the various considerations involved in the housing of foreign students. He might, however, first want to confer with the housing personnel or his

Advisory Committee to determine what kind of group would be most useful for considering immediate and long-range needs.

Those consulted, individually or as a group, could include: (1) the person(s) responsible for the admission of undergraduate (and, when practical, graduate) foreign students; (2) the director of housing (where there are both On-Campus and Off-Campus Housing Bureaus, both offices should be represented); (3) residence hall directors and counselors; (4) food services personnel; (5) selected students or staff involved in orientation programs, on-going programs of interpretation, or other campus programming for foreign and American students; (6) community persons involved in the housing of foreign students, if feasible; (7) community volunteers who assist foreign students in finding housing.

OVERSEAS INFORMATION ON HOUSING

The airweight brochure recommended as part of the institution's response to the initial inquiry from abroad should contain a section that deals with housing.* The information given should include: (1) a brief description of the housing situation at the institution; (2) a statement summarizing the regulations or requirements that apply (on-campus or off-campus housing); (3) an indication of the services available to assist admitted foreign students with housing arrangements (particularly for off-campus housing).

Some follow-up with respect to housing must be made for admitted foreign students.** If they are expected to live on campus in residence halls, all of which are fairly uniform as to accommodations, they might be sent a housing information sheet which: (1) describes the facilities; (2) indicates what the facilities will provide and include; (3) specifies costs (separately identifying room and board); (4) indicates the *period of time covered* by the estimates. If there is a *choice* about on-campus housing, a reservation card might be used that includes space for the foreign student to indicate the preferred room arrangement (single or multiple) and the preferred number of roommates. The financial information pertinent to housing could also be placed or repeated in the section of the preliminary brochure that deals with finances, or on the forms used to ascertain the financial position of the applicant and inform him of the various costs he is expected to meet.†

If the institution uses a variety of housing arrangements on and off campus which are available to both foreign and American students, these should be described to admitted foreign students. Care should be taken to: (1) define the different arrangements so that they have some idea of the alternatives; (2) give at least rough estimates of the differing costs; and (3) indicate the period of time on which the estimates are based. Many institutions in the general situation of diversity (and perhaps scarcity) of housing facilities have found it useful to develop a separate housing brochure which not only describes the individual situation at that campus, but also indicates what services are avail-

*Cf. *Guideline* on "Selection and Admissions," page 3.

**Cf. pocket materials.

†Cf. *Guideline* on "Finances and Employment," p. 3; for information on financial assistance in the form of special room and/or board opportunities, cf. p. 6 and the FACT SHEET of the *Guideline*.

able and which offices are prepared to assist new students.* Such a brochure is most commonly developed by the Housing Office and used for all students. Unless it is designed specifically for foreign students in cooperation with the Foreign Student Adviser, it is important that the Foreign Student Adviser be consulted to ascertain its usefulness to a person from another culture.

The Foreign Student Adviser might be able to suggest additional ways by which his office and the Housing Office could cooperate to meet the special needs of foreign students who do *not* expect to live on campus. For example, the two offices could develop a joint statement that (1) acknowledges their awareness of the foreign student's need to feel some degree of assurance about housing availability and assistance; (2) acknowledges the foreign student's preference to choose his own housing; (3) points out the foreign student's initial lack of experience as a basis for choice; (4) urges early arrival to secure adequate housing; (5) warns against making hasty commitments which may subsequently prove disappointing; and (6) offers whatever assistance is possible. One institution's solution is to write to the accepted foreign student offering *temporary* housing upon his arrival.** This gives the student adequate time after his arrival to investigate and assess the various possibilities that have been described in written materials sent overseas. The procedure also reduces the likelihood of dissatisfaction by postponing a choice until the student has a first-hand understanding of the alternatives.

ARRIVAL ASSISTANCE AND PRELIMINARY ORIENTATION

Whether the foreign student is required to live on campus in pre-assigned accommodations, has made adequate off-campus housing arrangements prior to arrival, or has arrived without any firm housing arrangements whatsoever, the institution must be ready to provide arrival assistance and preliminary orientation to housing for all new foreign students. A cooperative approach to this responsibility is often essential. Its importance increases with the number of new arrivals, the diversity of their needs, and the competition for accommodations.

Arrival Assistance: Two valuable sources of volunteer support to the Foreign Student Adviser and the housing personnel in providing arrival assistance for new foreign students are: (1) veteran foreign and American students; and (2) community volunteers (including, often, faculty wives). Many larger institutions with high enrollments of foreign students depend upon both kinds of volunteers to: (1) meet the foreign student and welcome him when he arrives; (2) assist the student in finding temporary housing, if needed (short-term community hospitality may be involved); (3) take him to his room if an assignment has been made or to housing that he has arranged; (4) assist the student seeking housing to understand and evaluate the various kinds of housing available (including, if requested, help with assessing expenses in relation to his budget); (5) accompany the student on his exploratory visits; (6) explain the obligations and privileges involved in different types of housing arrangements (on or off campus housing); (7) act, if necessary and appropriate, as a friendly interpreter between the student and the individuals he encounters; and (8) help students get settled.†

*Cf. FACT SHEET.

**Cf. pocket materials.

†Many institutions or volunteer community groups loan needed clothes and furniture to new foreign students, temporarily or for the duration of their stay. Community volunteers may also act as drivers for newly arrived foreign students seeking housing.

Where the number of newly arrived foreign students is very small, any or all of these services may be provided directly by the housing personnel or by the Foreign Student Adviser's office. If volunteers *are* involved, however, it is essential that they have careful orientation, since they, in turn, provide a form of orientation to the students.

Preliminary Orientation: The type of orientation and its method of organization depend, again, on the housing facilities available and the regulations or requirements of the institution relative to housing.

On-Campus Housing: Presumably, on-campus housing is reserved in advance. Some orientation to it may therefore be included in information sent to the student prior to his arrival. Whether this is the case or not, post-arrival orientation to on-campus housing is highly desirable. Often very fine arrival orientation can be provided by residence hall staff and/or student volunteers, particularly if the Foreign Student Adviser alerts them to the special needs of foreign students and helps them to realize their importance in the total experience of the new foreign student. Among the points that orientation to on-campus housing should cover are: (1) an introduction to the kinds of on-campus housing (more detailed than the housing information sent overseas, designed to establish a frame of reference for preparing the student who may subsequently think of moving); (2) special explanation of the housing unit in which the student is currently placed; (3) information about the regulations that apply and the responsibilities of the residents; and (4) identification of the person(s) within the residence to see for special assistance or needed services.

Off-Campus Housing: How preliminary orientation to off-campus housing is provided and what the timing is depend on the local situation, how early foreign students generally arrive, what temporary accommodations are available, and how flexible the institution is in its housing services. Where diversity of housing and staggered arrival times are the case, it is helpful to both the newly arrived students and the volunteers who assist them to have special written information that describes each type of available housing. This might simply be an expansion of the information sent overseas, with the following details added or emphasized: (1) complete and clear information about legal requirements and/or implications; (2) definition of terms commonly involved; (3) rights, privileges, and responsibilities of both the tenant and the landlord or householder; (4) suggested standards or criteria for evaluating off-campus housing;* (5) warning against the hasty signing of leases or other agreements; and (6) *strong* recommendation to seek appropriate advice about housing first.

LATE ARRIVALS

Late arrival in and of itself is not *usually* due to intentional disregard by the student of the institution's advice, its urging, or even its requirements about arrival times. Often the student has been delayed by unavoidable or unforeseen developments at home or in transit. That some foreign students will arrive late is to be expected and, insofar as possible, anticipated. Unless housing has been pre-arranged and can be held for them, the housing personnel and the Foreign Student Adviser will need to cooperate to meet their individual needs, often with assistance from community volunteers and short-term hospitality.

*Cf. pocket materials.

THE KINDS OF HOUSING

There is probably no single ideal housing arrangement for foreign students. There is, undoubtedly, an ideal housing situation — one that provides a variety of housing alternatives with differing facilities that will accommodate the diverse needs, habits, and distinctive tastes of the foreign student population. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each institution, through its housing personnel, the Foreign Student Adviser and others concerned, to consider its own facilities and practices, to assess them critically, and to develop ways by which improvements can be made and resources strengthened, as well as to explore and consider new directions in the housing of foreign students.

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

On-campus housing may include any of the following arrangements: (1) residence halls; (2) fraternities (and sororities); (3) cooperatives; (4) international houses or residences. The residence hall is the focus of this section, since it is assumed that more foreign students live in this kind of on-campus housing than in the other three types. Some of the comments and suggestions made specifically about residence halls would also apply to other on-campus housing.

The advantages in any type of on-campus housing for foreign students should be considered from two points of view — the needs and preferences of the foreign student, and the structure, character, and purpose of the housing unit itself, including consideration of the other people who reside there. To the foreign student, personal comfort, study conditions, location in relationship to campus and community facilities, cost, and opportunities for association with Americans *and* other foreign students, particularly countrymen, may be important. To the institution, the major consideration should be how effectively each type of housing supports, satisfies, and brings together the individuals who reside there.

Housing should be more than a place where one sleeps, eats, and keeps his belongings. Within the physical facility itself, there needs to be the kind of atmosphere that makes for a psychologically comfortable place to live, one that encourages and provides opportunities for relaxing, being oneself, and enjoying others. Equally important is the opportunity for exchange. Any type of on-campus housing that mixes foreign and American students can offer unique opportunities for special learning experiences between persons of different cultures, provided that some thought and *cooperative effort* go into making the most of each situation.

Residence Halls

There are many ways to make the residence hall housing experience a significant one for both foreign and American students. Among them:

1. orientation to the cross-cultural experience for American and foreign students who are expected to room together, and for residence hall directors or counselors who may have to meet special needs or problems;*

*The brochure, "Cross-Cultural Understanding," would be useful here. Residence hall counselors might also be provided with more sophisticated reading on such subjects as typical experiences in patterns of adjustment to new societies or the role of the counselor, and encouraged to discuss these matters with their colleagues.

2. general programming within the residence hall that is sufficiently free of cultural bias to interest and include the foreign student;

3. special programming from time to time that is designed to focus on the foreign student or his country and culture and to involve him, *on a voluntary basis*, in the presentation;

4. room assignments for the older, more mature single foreign students that insure a degree of privacy and allow, if possible, association with other foreign and American students of similar age and maturity.

Special programming within the residence hall designed to expand, first, the contact between foreign and American students but, more importantly, their permanent awareness, understanding, and interest in one another can make a very important and special contribution to the educational experience of those involved. Residence halls with a relatively small number of students have, undoubtedly, an advantage in that cross-cultural programming could include and involve virtually all the residents. Larger units may have to direct efforts to a selected group. In either case, it is the students themselves who must be interested and take the initiative, with encouragement and assistance from residence hall directors, counselors, student leaders, and the Foreign Student Adviser.

A number of institutions are currently experimenting with various approaches to programming in residence halls to internationalize the housing experience for a selected group of students. Some of these call for "international units" or "international floors" within the larger structure. Often the students involved develop their own cross-cultural programs and activities which are generally open to other residents who are interested. The *Guideline* on "American-Foreign Student Relationships" has a section dealing with housing which describes special experiments in residence halls at selected institutions.*

Fraternities**

A number of institutions have also experimented with various plans to involve fraternities with selected foreign students. One version of the plan is to place the foreign student in the fraternity, with the institution covering or waiving tuition and fees, and the fraternity contributing room and board. This approach not only resolves the foreign student's housing needs but also provides a degree of financial assistance.†

Usually the foreign student is not a voting member of the fraternity. Regardless of his membership status or the source of the financing for his room and board, it is imperative to the success of the arrangement that the foreign student be *regarded* as a member and have *the same access* to facilities, functions, and fellowship that a regular member has. The fraternity itself should clearly understand and agree to this condition before any foreign student is placed there.

*Cf. pp. 6-7, and the FACT SHEET, of the *Guideline*.

**The term "fraternity" is used generically, to include sororities.

†Plans that call only for occasional hospitality or the taking of meals at the fraternity are *not* considered as a housing arrangement for foreign students, but are described further on the FACT SHEET of the *Guideline* on "Finances and Employment." (G-7)

Co-operatives

The concept of the co-operative may be familiar to some foreign students, but very strange and baffling to those who come from societies organized predominantly or exclusively around the family. Many foreign students, moreover, have had little or no experience in taking individual responsibility for shared work. If co-operatives exist on the campus and are open to all students, the foreign student who wishes to reside there may need special help in understanding the expectations of the group with respect to individual responsibilities, particularly those that have to do with sharing facilities and work and meeting financial obligations. If the co-operative is *generally* used more by graduate level students than undergraduate students, it is assumed that the foreign students who are placed there will be selected on the basis of their comparable age and maturity.

If either the fraternity or the co-operative is to be used to house foreign students, the success of the arrangement and the mutual satisfaction of those involved will depend upon providing as much orientation as possible for: (1) the foreign students, to the nature and function of the particular arrangement, and their responsibilities and rights in it; (2) the American residents, to the cross-cultural experience, with emphasis on the special benefits and learning opportunities in inter-cultural associations and exchange. American students should be encouraged to develop their own ways to involve and include the foreign student and encourage in turn his special contribution. The Foreign Student Adviser will want to seek the volunteer assistance of the students themselves in planning and carrying through orientation and other programs, or promoting informal exchange.

International Houses and Residences

As a category, the major shared characteristic of international houses and residences is the concept of the value of inter-cultural association and exchange. Beyond this, there are several different kinds of both international houses and international residences, and their definitions vary according to the function, purpose, structure, affiliation, and financing that characterize each facility.

The three large, well known "International House" facilities in New York, Chicago, and Berkeley are somewhat special and atypical arrangements. Although financed in part by the same source, they are independent of one another, each having its own policies, practices, and separate supervision. They share the characteristic of providing a total international program within the House that goes beyond residential concerns to meet broader international interests and serve a larger community.*

In addition, there are other less well-known International Houses on several campuses across the country. Generally speaking these, too, have some source of additional if not external financial support and, while not necessarily the exclusive source of international activity for the campus and community, are often the recognized center for such interests. They may be for undergraduate or graduate foreign and American students, or both. They generally provide all the services of a regular residence.

An "international residence" may be simply a house where people of different nations sleep and keep their belongings but may not take their meals nor engage in special international programming. Or it may be more in the nature

*Cf. FACT SHEET.

of an international co-operative.* Again, the variations are as numerous as the experiments being tried.

Any institution interested in establishing an international house or residence should look into the various possibilities thoroughly and consider carefully the conditions and resources needed to make an international residential facility successful. Thought must be given to such considerations as the best ratio of American to foreign student residents, methods of screening and selection, assignment to rooms and roommates, supervision, orientation, on-going programming, and the involvement of non-resident students and other interested individuals from the academic or local community.

RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

Food Services: Familiar food is particularly important to foreign students whose dietary habits and preferences are very different from typical fare in the United States. A centralized food service should be able to provide such items as rice on a regular basis to all housing facilities without undue inconvenience. Other preferred dishes could also be served occasionally, perhaps featuring traditional foods in observation of special national or religious festivals of foreign countries. Even within a decentralized food service system, where each housing unit is responsible for its own menus, those responsible could be urged to provide occasional variations in the menu in order to include foreign dishes. Whatever the organization of the food services at the institution, it would be good if the Foreign Student Adviser and housing personnel could meet with food service personnel to discuss what steps could be taken to meet the dietary preferences of foreign students. Included in this discussion should also be persons responsible for the operation of cafeterias in student unions or student activities buildings. It would also be desirable to provide, upon occasion, an opportunity for groups of foreign students to prepare and share their national dishes with other students, assuming they take responsibility for care of equipment and facilities. This might be possible in the setting of an international house or residential center, a cooperative, a fraternity or sorority, or the student union.

Vacation Periods: If the institution closes the majority of its housing facilities during vacation periods, the Foreign Student Adviser needs to be ready to undertake one of two arrangements on behalf of the foreign students: (1) in cooperation with housing personnel or residence hall directors, to provide alternate temporary housing on the campus; (2) in cooperation with community residents, to provide short-term hospitality. Foreign students who prefer to make their own vacation plans and have the necessary funds might be directed to any of a number of organized programs designed to provide special experiences for foreign students during vacation periods.**

Graduate Housing: The foreign graduate student presumably shares certain characteristics with the American graduate student: he is usually older, accustomed to a degree of privacy, less tolerant of disturbances to his work, and often less interested in the extra-curricular activities that attract undergraduate students. He may prefer to seek people of his own age and interests and to plan his own social activities.† If graduate housing on campus is to meet

*Cf. FACT SHEET, page 1, number 4.

**Cf. FACT SHEET for the *Guideline* on "Interpretation of the United States." (G-8)

†This varies with the individual student, his background, his patterns of associating with others, and his sense of initiative. Cf. *Guideline* on "American-Foreign Student Relationships," page 9.

the needs and expectations of graduate students, foreign or American, consideration should be given to the following: (1) provision of single rooms; (2) quiet reading rooms and study areas; (3) common lounges or areas for conversation, recreation, relaxation; (4) common dining facilities; (5) if possible, provision of basic cooking facilities for individual use on a reservation basis.

Housing for Married Students: More and more institutions are faced with a swelling demand from married students for on-campus housing. The needs of married foreign students in this respect should be basically the same as those of married American students — reasonably comfortable living, sleeping, eating, and studying space, with opportunities for voluntary association. Some foreign students, however, may be unfamiliar with the particular standards and routine practices that characterize American housekeeping, and may need special help in understanding and learning them. This may be particularly true for those foreign wives who are not students themselves. With a smaller circle of contacts and often little language facility, they may be at a loss to understand, let alone assume, their responsibilities. Community volunteers, faculty wives, or other wives residing in the housing complex can be of assistance by: (1) accompanying foreign wives to supermarkets and other shops, stores, or service centers; (2) introducing them to the many and varied household products and services; (3) assisting them to purchase or to borrow essential household items (particularly baby equipment); (4) introducing them to the facilities of the American kitchen and helping them to understand and meet standards of cleanliness. This same kind of assistance is equally important to and appreciated by single foreign students living off-campus.*

OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

Off-campus housing usually consists of private apartments and rooms in private homes or boarding houses. While these two types of housing differ in several important respects, the use of either type by foreign students requires basically the same kind of preparation. In addition to the suggestions made in other sections of the *Guideline* that pertained to off-campus housing, the following steps are important for the success of the off-campus housing experience for foreign students:**

1. *preliminary* determination, by institutional personnel, of what standards will be applied to off-campus housing for all students; this step should preferably involve the active participation of the highest level of administration but at least have their concurrence;
2. determination and clear definition of the criteria required to meet established standards;
3. communication of criteria to landlords and householders, with equal emphasis on the important role they play in the experiences of foreign students;
4. development of a system to determine what off-campus housing currently meets the criteria;
5. maintenance of a list of approved or acceptable off-campus housing; by the housing office or, if more appropriate to the institution's organi-

*Cf. FACT SHEET for information on selected programs designed to serve foreign wives.

**These steps represent the maximum protection for all concerned and are intended to be used selectively, according to the institution's particular needs or situation.

zation of its foreign student program, by the Foreign Student Adviser's office;

6. provision for advising foreign students on matters related to housing; this should include both an explanation of the criteria and information about rental conditions, facilities or services included, leases, obligations, and rights; preferably summarized in writing and given to the foreign student for his reference;
7. provision for housing placement assistance, using volunteers as available and appropriate;
8. follow-up with the student to determine final placement and satisfaction with accommodations;
9. follow-up with the landlord or householder to determine satisfaction and to offer the on-going services of the institution that relate to off-campus housing.

In some situations, there may be a third kind of off-campus housing available for foreign students — residence with a private family. If the institution is directly involved in arranging "family placements," it is the institution's responsibility first to exercise great selectivity, in terms of both the families and the students, and then to provide both with adequate orientation to their respective goals, needs, and responsibilities. The institution's expectations should also be made clear to everyone. There should be particular emphasis on the learning potential and the opportunity for cross-cultural exchange.

If the student is expected to contribute to his upkeep by performing certain duties, the nature of his obligation, including the amount and kind of work and when it is to be done, should be openly discussed and clearly understood by both the family and the student. Both should also know which office or individual at the institution is available to assist in the event of difficulties, misunderstandings, or need for further advising. Orientation and/or advising, however, should be designed not just to resolve problems but to emphasize the many benefits in the "family placement" arrangement. Many of the steps listed above would be equally relevant to "family placements" and would contribute to the success of the experience.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

Housing Advisement: Some foreign students may need special help in adjusting their expectations about housing to the realities of the off-campus housing situation, particularly their frequent misunderstanding of the relationship between facilities and costs. The financial obligation that one assumes by signing a lease or any other kind of written agreement should *always* be reviewed with the student before he commits himself. Foreign students may also need continuing assistance in matters directly related to budgeting, such as whether or not, and how, to purchase high-cost items (furniture) and how to manage continuing costs (food and necessary services).*

Isolation: Older foreign graduate students, foreign graduate professionals, and married foreign students tend to prefer private, off-campus housing and to congregate primarily by nationality but also by field of study within the nationality group, if possible (Indian engineers, for example). Generally speak-

*Cf. *Guideline* on "Finances and Employment," p. 7.

ing, the greater the difference between their culture and ours (and, on some campuses, the more technical the field of study), the greater the desire to establish an independent and familiar atmosphere. This tendency should be understood as both natural and necessary to some degree. However, the danger for the foreign student is that he may unwittingly and unintentionally find himself in a situation of apparent self-segregation and real separation from the rest of the academic community. Many institutions are finding it possible to alleviate the cultural isolation of foreign students who reside off-campus through carefully developed campus programs designed to promote, maintain, and expand association with other students and faculty. The Foreign Student Adviser and veteran foreign and American student leaders can be instrumental both in involving these foreign students in established campus activities and in successfully communicating to them American students' interest in cross-cultural learning and exchange.

Discrimination: Discrimination by a landlord or householder against a foreign student can do real damage to the foreign student's experience in this country. While there is no easy way to attack and erase discrimination that stems from deeply ingrained attitudes or ideas, the institution can make a very clear and firm policy statement defining its stand toward discrimination in housing, and outlining what steps it will be prepared to take if reports of discrimination are received and confirmed. Many institutions have developed a general statement about discrimination toward *any* student in off-campus housing. Some Foreign Student Advisers have developed a special statement about discrimination toward *foreign* students when advising landlords and householders of the institutional criteria that will be applied to off-campus housing. The foreign student should be advised of and urged to accept his responsibility to report undesirable experiences so that conditions may be corrected.

Mobility: Institutions with high enrollments of foreign students and large percentages living off-campus are often faced with the "mobility problem." It is a problem both to the institutional personnel who are responsible for keeping track of foreign students and to the landlords or householders left with sudden vacancies. Unless the student has signed a lease and is legally responsible for the contracted period of residence, probably the only course of action for the institution is to urge students to give fair and adequate notice to their landlords, and to report their changes of residence. The housing office should, of course, cooperate with landlords in filling vacancies, and with the office of the Foreign Student Adviser to notify him of all changes of residence of foreign students.

CONCLUSION

The way in which an institution houses its students can have an enormous influence on their total educational experience. Making full use, within each housing unit, of the rich and varied opportunities for exchange between foreign and American students requires particularly careful consideration, discussion, and review of both the resources and the potential at hand. Careful coordinated planning must be followed by continuing and thoughtful evaluation. The housing experiences of foreign students, on or off the campus, are the prelude and the background to the success of other experiences in their sojourn here. To make the housing experience as satisfying and rewarding as possible for them is a compelling responsibility.

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